

PLANNING BOARD
City of Orange Township
29 North Day Street
Orange, NJ 07050

MEETING MINUTES
November 12, 2025

Chairman Holmes called the November 12, 2025 City of Orange Township Planning Board Special Meeting to order at 7:32 p.m. Salute to the Flag. Compliance with the “Sunshine Law” was acknowledged. Roll Call. Meeting Notice.

Please note this meeting was held virtually via Zoom Meeting and all login information has been posted on the City of Orange Township website (www.orangenj.gov) as well as the local newspaper “Transcript.”

Board Members Present: Enock Faustin, Callistus Onyiuke, Christopher Mobley, Council Vice-President Weldon Montague, Jean-Guy Lauture, Mayor Dwayne Warren, Vice-Chair Antoinette Jones, Chairman Dwight Holmes.

Board Members Absent: None

Professionals Present:
Alexandra Reyes, Board Secretary
Gerard Haizel, Board Planner
Joseph Wenzel, Board Attorney
John Cahillane, Board Engineer

Correspondence:

None

Minutes:

Adopt September 17, 2025 Meeting minutes:

Motion to adopt by Member Lauture **second** by Member Mobley to adopt the September 17, 2025 Meeting minutes.

Those in Favor: Member Mobley, Member Lauture, Mayor Warren, Vice-Chair Jones, Chairman Holmes

Those Opposed: None

Those Absent: None

Those Abstained: Member Faustin, Member Onyiuke, Council Vice-President Montague

Motion carried: 5-0-0-3

Adopt September 24, 2025 Meeting minutes:

Motion to adopt by Council Vice-President Montague **second** by Member Faustin to adopt the September 24, 2025 Meeting minutes.

Those in Favor: Member Faustin, Member Onyiuke, Member Lauture, Council Vice-President Montague, Mayor Warren, Chairman Holmes

Those Opposed: None

Those Absent: None

Those Abstained: Member Mobley, Vice-Chair Jones

Motion carried: 6-0-0-2

Memorialize resolution for Case# 25-07 10 Essex urban renewal LLC- 8-22 S. Essex Ave- Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan Approval.

Carried to the December 18, 2025 Planning Board meeting at the Applicant Attorney request.

Memorialize resolution for Case# 25-08 23 Essex urban renewal LLC- 26 Tony Galento Plaza- Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan Approval.

Carried to the December 18, 2025 Planning Board meeting at the Applicant Attorney request.

Case# 25-13 VA 475 Urban Renewal LLC- 475 Main St- Amended Site Plan Approval.

Attorney Reggie Jenkins of Trent, Isabel, Siddiqui & Shadianian appeared as the representative of 475 Urban Renewal, LLC and introduced the application for amended site plan approval limited to signage. The original redevelopment approval was granted in 2022; final signage and branding were not finalized at that time.

Relief Requested

- A C-variance is required to permit the proposed canopy sign with letters that are a greater height than permitted.
- A C-variance is required to permit the proposed address/identification signs that are closer to the public sidewalk than permitted

- A C-variance is required to permit the proposed business signs that are closer to the public sidewalk than permitted.
- A C-variance is required to permit the proposed address sign that will be internally lit

Witness #1 – John Saracco, Architect was sworn in.

Mr. Saracco confirmed his New Jersey architectural license remains active and in good standing.

Testimony included:

- Signage integrates with façade materials.
- LED illumination shielded, sign will include 3D Acrylic lettering, double layer, which will be affixed to the top of the canopy and internally lit. The proposed sign will include a section of 9-inch lettering, which will extend for 27.4-inches and a section of 25.8-inch lettering that will extend for 90-inches.
- No pedestrian obstruction.

Board Member Discussion

- Council Vice-President Montague questioned wind resistance and structural reinforcement of canopy signage.
- Mr. Saracco explained structural engineering shop drawings will be reviewed by the Building Department prior to permit issuance.
- Board Attorney clarified that all signage requires secondary review through applicable code departments.
- Member Mobley asked whether original signage design differed from current submission.
- Chairman Holmes raised concerns regarding deviation from ordinance standards.
- Member Lauture commented signage appears proportionate to building mass.
- Member Faustin asked about precedent implications.

Board Professional Review

Gerard Haizel, Board Planner, testified signage is appropriate in scale and harmonious with the Main Street corridor.

John Cahillane, Board Engineer, testified no engineering objections and structural review will occur at permit stage.

Public Portion

Motion to Open Public Portion by Member Mobley; seconded by Council Vice-President Montague. All in favor.

Rachel Tennant – 461 Waverly Place: Expressed concern regarding size and aesthetics.

Lynn Ogbourne – 38 Ridge Street: Raised concerns about scale, lighting, and deviation language.

Attorney Jenkins address the public concerns.

Motion to Close Public Portion by Member Mobley; seconded by Member Faustin. All in favor.

Motion by Vice Chair Jones Second by Member Mobley to approve the Amended Site Plan for Case #25-13 VA, 475 Urban Renewal, LLC, 475 Main Street, with the following variances:

- Excessive lettering size of 25.8 inches where six (6) inches is permitted;
- Non-permitted source of illumination for an internally lit canopy sign;
- Insufficient signage height above the sidewalk of six (6) feet where ten (10) feet is required for the address signs;
- Insufficient signage height above the sidewalk of six (6) feet where ten (10) feet is required for the business signs.

As a condition of approval, the Applicant shall comply with the recommendations of the Board Professionals as detailed in:

- Planner’s Report dated November 3, 2025; and
- Engineer’s Report dated November 6, 2025.

Those in Favor: Member Faustin, Member Onyuke, Member Mobley, Member Lauture, Mayor Warren, Vice-Chair Jones, Chairman Holmes

Those Opposed: Council Vice-President Montague

Those Absent: None

Those Abstained: None

Motion carried: 7-1-0-0

Case# 25-12 VA 583, LLC- 583 Scotland Road – Preliminary and Final Site Plan Approval.

Attorney Reggie Jenkins appeared represented VA 583, LLC and introduced the application. The site is located at 583 Scotland Road, identified as Block 6104, Lot 3 on the Official Tax Map of the City of Orange Township, New Jersey, seeking demolition of the existing structure to allow for construction of a new six-story mixed-use building containing fifty (50) residential units and fifty-four (54) parking spaces. The property is located within the City’s Central Valley Redevelopment Area – District 4 Zone. Mid-rise, multi-family buildings are permitted in the Central Valley Redevelopment Area – District 4 Zone.

Relief Requested:

- Minimum front yard setback where five (5) feet are required and zero (0) feet is proposed;
- Minimum side setback (facing street) where five (5) feet are required and zero (0) feet is proposed; and
- Maximum impervious coverage where ninety percent (90%) is permitted and ninety-two point seventy-four percent (92.74%) is proposed, and ninety-nine point sixty-one percent (99.61%) exists as a non-conformity.

Applicant Witnesses

Witness #1 John Sirocco – Architect:

Mr. Saracco presented the Architectural drawings submitted to the board depicting 50 residential units, 54 parking spaces, enclosed garage, amenity space and rooftop mechanical units.

Unit Type	Square Footage Range	Number of Units
1-BR	613 – 644 SF	10
2-BR	882 – 907 SF	30
3-BR	1,178 – 1,207 SF	10
Total Units	—	50

Category	Description	Quantity
Amenity Space	First Floor Amenity	1,780 SF
Gymnasium	Basement Level	Included
Parking	Total Parking Stalls	54

Mr. Saracco presented the proposed exterior materials & Façade treatment, which incorporates:

- A combination of EIFS and brick veneer on the primary street-facing façades
- Hardi plank siding on secondary elevations
- An aluminum storefront window system enclosing the lobby and first-floor amenity space along Scotland Road
- Garage entrances on Scotland Road and Tremont Avenue are enclosed by overhead doors.

Witness #2 James Dipple Civil Engineer – L2A Land Design presented the Site Plans.

The Engineer confirmed compliance with RSIS standards, NJDEP stormwater regulations, and municipal utility requirements, and agreed to comply with all Board Professional recommendations.

The site includes basement and first-floor structured parking, ADA-compliant spaces including van-accessible stalls, and EV charging stations with make-ready infrastructure in accordance with State requirements.

Garage circulation complies with required turning radius standards, supported by swept-path analysis. Audible and visual alert systems will be installed at garage egress for pedestrian safety.

The Applicant has engaged New Jersey Transit regarding potential relocation of the existing bus stop. If approved, the relocation will be coordinated with NJ Transit; if not, the existing location will remain.

Grading directs stormwater to approved collection systems, and utility connections will tie into existing municipal infrastructure. Landscaping and lighting plans comply with redevelopment standards and are designed to minimize off-site impacts.

Witness # 3 Betsy Dolan – Traffic Engineer:

Ms. Dolan provided testimony regarding the applicant Traffic Impact Study submitted prepared by Dolan & Dean Consulting Engineers, dated May 15, 2025, evaluating the impacts of the proposed 50-unit, six-story mixed-use development with 1,780 square feet of retail space.

Using ITE Trip Generation methodology, the proposed development is projected to generate:

- **34 trips during the AM peak hour**
- **44 trips during the PM peak hour**

The study notes that this traffic generation falls well below the 100-peak-hour-trip threshold typically requiring significant mitigation.

The proposed site access includes one right-in/right-out driveway on Scotland Road and one driveway on Tremont Avenue, with turning restrictions recommended due to sight distance constraints and the proximity of the railroad overpass and NJ Transit bus stop. The study concludes that the site driveways will operate safely and efficiently under projected peak hour conditions.

Exhibits Presented

During the architectural presentation, Mr. Saracco utilized a contemporaneous Google Earth and Street View presentation to demonstrate existing site conditions and surrounding context.

Board Attorney Joseph Wenzel clarified for the record that the presentation consisted of current Google Earth imagery depicting existing site conditions as of November 2024, and it was accepted into the record as a contemporaneous depiction of existing conditions

While no formal lettered exhibit number was assigned during that exchange, the presentation was entered into the record as a visual contextual reference.

Additionally, the Traffic Impact Study dated May 15, 2025 was referenced and discussed in detail by the Traffic Engineer as part of her testimony.

Board Member Comments – Case #25-12

During testimony and questioning, the following Board Member comments were made:

- Questions were raised regarding traffic projections and whether the removal of the retail component reduced traffic impact.
- Discussion occurred regarding separation of the two parking entrances and operational flow.
- Board members discussed the elevated sidewalk condition under the NJ Transit overpass.
- Questions were asked regarding impervious coverage exceeding ordinance by 2%.
- Discussion occurred regarding family-oriented unit mix and parking sufficiency.

- Clarification was requested regarding trash compactor operations and frequency of collection.
- Questions were asked regarding construction proximity to NJ Transit right-of-way.

The Traffic Engineer clarified that the submitted study was conservative and included traffic from a retail component that has since been removed, meaning actual traffic would be lower than projected.

The Civil Engineer clarified there is no internal ramp connection between garages and that both access points operate independently.

Board Professionals

John Cahillane, P.E., Board Engineer reviewed circulation, parking layout, and pedestrian safety. He noted the proposed design generally complies with engineering standards and emphasized the importance of audible and visual warning systems at the garage entrance to protect pedestrians. He identified a potential need for a design waiver related to compact parking spaces and recommended addressing it as part of the approval. He indicated no major engineering objections subject to compliance with his report and recommended safety measures.

Gerard Haizel, P.P., Board Planner focused on planning and streetscape considerations. He supported the front yard setback variance along Scotland Road, noting the recessed first floor improves pedestrian space and enhances the streetscape. He encouraged relocation of the existing bus stop due to pedestrian safety concerns near the garage entrance and recommended continued coordination with NJ Transit. He indicated overall consistency with redevelopment objectives subject to compliance with his report.

Public Portion

Motion to Open Public Portion made by Member Latorre and seconded by Member Mobley. All in favor. Motion carried. Public portion opened.

Public Comment

Rachel Tennant, 461 Wave (as stated on record), raised questions regarding ADA parking proximity to the elevator, elevator location, pedestrian protection, bike racks, loading operations, bus stop relocation, parking count, demolition of the existing chimney, and environmental concerns. Applicant professionals responded that ADA spaces are located approximately 50 feet from the entrance, loading will be managed on-site, the chimney will be demolished, and environmental documentation will be provided.

Alicia Rodriguez, 47 Mountain View Avenue, expressed concerns regarding sidewalk width, traffic congestion, pedestrian safety at the garage entrance, delivery operations, open space, and bus stop relocation. Applicant professionals responded that the project increases usable sidewalk space due to the recessed first floor, the design functions regardless of bus stop relocation, and deliveries will be scheduled and managed.

Motion to Close Public Portion made and seconded. Public portion closed.

Motion to Extend Time

Motion to extend the meeting until 11:00 PM made by Council Vice President Montague and seconded by Member Latorre. All in favor. Motion carried.

Bus Stop Discussion

Mayor Warren inquired regarding the formal process for NJ Transit bus stop relocation. Board Attorney Wenzel explained that NJ Transit makes an initial determination and the municipality may need to acknowledge or participate in the request. The Applicant agreed to collaborate with the City regarding ongoing discussions.

Motion for Approval

Motion to approve made by Council Vice President Montague and seconded by Member Mobley.

Conditions of Approval (As Stated by Board Attorney Wenzel)

1. Submission of revised landscaping plans.
2. Installation of pedestrian safety and warning devices at the garage entrance.
3. Additional asphalt sidewalk improvements subject to Board Engineer review.
4. Relocation of the garage door to eliminate compact parking spaces.
5. Collaboration with the City regarding NJ Transit bus stop relocation.
6. Submission of formal environmental documentation to the Board Engineer.

Those in Favor: Member Faustin, Member Onyiuke, Member Mobely, Member Lauture, Mayor Warren, Vice-Chair Jones, Chairman Holmes

Those Opposed: Council Vice-President Montague

Those Absent: None

Those Abstained: None

Motion carried: 7-1-0-0

Old Business:

Enforcement of the 496 Central Ave property maintenance. At the Mayor's request, the Municipal Court date and status will be posted on the City website.

New Business:

None

Motion to Adjourn made by Member Lauture and seconded by Mayor Warren. All in favor.
Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at approximately 11:00 PM.

Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, December 18th, 2025 at 7:30 p.m. via virtually using Zoom Meeting.

Prepared by: Alexandra Reyes.